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By the grace of God and the approval of the Holy See  
From the Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church  
**Moran Mor Baselios Cleemis Catholicos**  
Blessings  
to the Metropolitan Archbishop, Metropolitans, Bishops,  
Corepicopoi, Rambans, Priests, Deacons, Religious and the Faithful



Prot. No. CPL 7/2008

*Praise be to the Triune God,  
self-existent, almighty, eternal and consubstantial!*

**The Visitation of His Eminence Leonardo Cardinal Sandri,  
the Prefect of the Congregation for Oriental Churches**

Most Rev. Bishops, Rev. Priests, Deacons, Religious and beloved Faithful in Christ!

From the Synod convened in Rome on the theme “The Word of God in the life and mission of the Church”, I, in communion with Pope Benedict XVI, the Supreme Head of the Universal Church, the Heads of the Oriental Catholic Churches, the College of Cardinals and the Bishops, wish you blessings and greetings. This Synod is involved in prayerful reflection to generate profound vision and holiness in the life of the Church embedded on the Word of God. The conferment of sainthood by the Holy Father on 12 October to the four Blessed, who had dedicated their lives for the fulfillment of the Word of God and who had lived as witnesses to the Christian faith, has indeed been a stupendous blessing to the Church. It has been a matter of pride and joy for the St. Thomas Christians of India that the one among the four

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Blessed was Sr. Alphonsa Muttathupadathu F.C.C., a daughter of India. As the first one raised to sainthood, St. Alphonsa is a great blessing to the Syro-Malabar Church, the people of Kerala and the Indian Church. After having celebrated the liturgy in the holy sanctuary with the Holy Father on that blessed occasion of canonisation, I write this pastoral letter to you. Thousands of people representing the Indians all over the world being blessed by participating in this sacred liturgy are a solace and blessing to the Indian Church suffering under persecution.

The representative of the Pope, Leonardo Cardinal Sandri, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, is arriving at Bharananganam in Kerala, to participate in the celebrations in India of elevating Sr. Alphonsa to sainthood. I hereby inform you that he will conduct an official visit in the Malankara Catholic Church after the above mentioned celebrations. At 9 a.m., on Monday, 10 November 2008, an official welcome of the Church will be accorded to His Eminence at St. Mary's Cathedral, Pattom, Trivandrum. Following this, His Eminence will give an official message to the Malankara Church during the Holy Qurbano, concelebrated by the Most Rev. Bishops and Rev. Fathers with the Faithful. At the public meeting thereafter, the Malankara Catholic Church will bestow reverence to His Eminence arriving as the representative of the Holy Apostolic See of Rome.

Needless to say that the Malankara Catholic Church in its autonomous existence in and communion in faith and sacraments with the Universal Catholic Church will be strengthened by this visit. As the first official visit of the Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, after the elevation of the Malankara Catholic Church to the Major Archiepiscopal status and the Major Archbishop-Catholicos installed as its Father and Head, it is a memorable occasion for our Church. I therefore exhort you to participate in all the programmes in connection with the visitation and draw blessings.

The visitation of His Eminence the Cardinal takes place in Trivandrum, the headquarters of our Church. It is expected that all our Eparchies will participate in this. Due to the constraints of time

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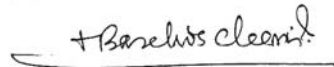
the Cardinal cannot visit each Eparchy. Under the leadership of Most Rev. Joshua Mar Ignathios, the Chairman of the Synodal Commission for Common Celebrations and Rt. Rev. Msgr. James Paravila, the Protosyncellus of the Major Archieparchy of Trivandrum as General Convener, various committees are formed and have started functioning for the success of the programmes.

I am happy to inform you that on Saturday, 11 October 2008, together with Most Rev. Abraham Mar Julios, the Metropolitan of Muvattupuzha, and our reverend Priests in Rome, I celebrated for all of you the Holy Qurbano on the main altar of St. Peter's Basilica. The seminarians of our Church studying in Rome, reverend Sisters and the Faithful of our Church who had come from America, Europe and Kerala participated in the Holy Qurbano. We commemorated and prayed for all our Most Rev. Bishops of happy memory and for the leaders of the Reunion Movement, the departed Priests, Religious, and the Faithful on that occasion.

May these present day events provide abundant divine presence and strengthen our ecclesial life. May the intercession of Saint Alphonsa strengthen you, your families and communities! May the good God bless you all abundantly.

May all these be fulfilled through the prayers of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God and the College of Apostles, especially of our Father St. Thomas and all the saints. Amen.

Your humble servant in the Lord,



**Moran Mor Baselios Cleemis Catholicos,**  
Major Archbishop  
of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church

13.10.2008  
Vatican City

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Our Father in Heaven...

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N.B. :This pastoral letter should be read in all our churches, mission centres and centres of worship during the Holy Qurbano next Sunday.

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